

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 CIEP-01 SP-02 STR-04 TRSE-00

LAB-04 SIL-01 SAM-01 OMB-01 NSC-05 SS-15 DODE-00

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AMEMBASSY LISBON

C O N F I D E N T I A L EC BRUSSELS 08221

MINIMIZE CONSIDERED

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR EAID EEC PO

SUBJECT: EC FOREIGN MINISTERS' COUNCIL, SEPTEMBER 15: PORTUGAL

REF: EC BRUSSELS 8142

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: AT THEIR SEPTEMBER 15 COUNCIL MEETING IN BRUSSELS, THE EC FOREIGN MINISTERS DEVOTED MOST OF THE TIME TO A DISCUSSION OF THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN PORTUGAL AND PLANS FOR COMMUNITY AID. THE MINISTERS CHARGED THE COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES ( COREPER) WITH COORDINATING MEMBER STATE VIEWS AS THE PORTUGUESE POLITICAL SITUATION EVOLVES AND AUTHORIZED COREPER, SOULD IT DECIDE THAT A "PLURALISTIC DEMOCRACY" PREVAILE, TO SET UP A MEETING WITH THE PORTUGUESE FOREIGN MINISTER IN CONNECTION WITH THE NEXT EC FOREIGN MINISTERS COUNCIL MEETING ON OCTOBER 6-7 IN LUXEMBOURG. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING THE RESTRICTED PORTION OF THEIR MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 15, THE EC FOREIGN MINISTERS DISCUSSED AT  
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LENGTH THE SITUATION IN PORTUGAL. ACCORDING TO

COUNCIL AND PERM. REP. SOURCES, THE DUTCH, DANES AND BRITISH URGED THAT THE COMMUNITY IMMEDIATELY ISSUE AN EXPRESSION OF SUPPORT AND COMMITMENT FOR FINANCIAL AID BASED ON THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF THE ANTICIPATED MAKEUP OF THE NEW PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT DUE TO TAKE OFFICE SEPTEMBER 16. THE FRENCH AND GERMANS, HOWEVER, URGED THAT THE COMMUNITY NOT PROCEED PRECIPITOUSLY, POINTING OUT THAT THE REPEATED STATEMENTS BY EC LEADERS THAT A "PLURALISTIC DEMOCRACY" WOULD HAVE TO EXIST PRIOR TO THE GRANTING OF ANY EC FINANCIAL AID CLEARLY HAD HAD A BENEFICIAL EFFECT IN PORTUGAL. THERE FOLLOWED CONSIDERABLE DISCUSSION AS TO THE BEST TIME FOR A PUBLIC INDICATION OF EC SUPPORT, BUT THE FRENCH/ GERMAN VIEW PREVAILED.

3. THE MINISTERS HAVE GIVEN COREPER THE TASK OF DECIDING WHETHER, ON THE BASIS OF THE MAKEUP OF THE NEW PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT, A " PLURALISTIC DEMOCRACY" CAN BE SAID TO EXIST. AT THE SAME TIME, THE MINISTERS URGED THAT THE COMMUNITY'S CONTINGENCY PLANNING FOR AID TO PORTUGAL (SEE EC BRUSSELS 8142) PROCEED AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. IF THE MEMBER STATES REACH A DECISION THAT THE NEW PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT CONSTITUTES A "PLURALISTIC DEMOCRACY," AND IF THESE "TECHNICAL PREPARATIONS" MOVE FORWARD SATISFACTORILY, THE MINISTERS HOPE TO SET UP A MEETING WITH THE PORTUGUESE FOREIGN MINISTER IN CONNECTION WITH THE EC FOREIGN MINISTERS' COUNCIL TO BE HELD IN LUXEMBOURG ON OCTOBER 6 AND 7.

4. AT THE OCTOBER 6 MEETING, THE MINISTERS HOPE THE EC WILL BE IN A POSITION TO: (A) GIVE POSITIVE PUBLIC SUPPORT TO THE NEW PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT, AND(B) BE IN A POSITION TO RESPOND TO PORTUGUESE REQUESTS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE ON THE BASIS OF THE COMPLETED TECHNICAL PREPARATIONS.

5. AT THEIR SEPTEMBER 15 MEETING, THE FOREIGN MINISTERS DID NOT, WE UNDERSTAND, SPECIFICALLY DISCUSS THE AMOUNT OF PROPOSED EC FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO PORTUGAL, ALTHOUGH THE COMMISSION'S FIGURE OF 700 MILION UNITS OF ACCOUNT CONFIDENTIAL

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OVER THREE YEARS WAS MENTIONED.

6. COMMENT: ASSUMING POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS PROCEED SATISFACTORILY, WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR THE US AND THE EC TO EXAMINE JOINTLY WHAT THE MAGNITUDE OF THE PORTUGUESE ECONOMIC PROBLEM IS AND WHAT ACTIONS BY THE EUROPEANS, THE US AND THE PORTUGUESE THEMSELVES ARE REQUIRED. IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT SUBSTANTIAL EXTERNAL

ASSISTANCE WILL BE NECESSARY AS WELL AS THE ADOPTION OF  
APPROPRIATE POLICIES BY THE NEW PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT.  
FROM HERE EARLY CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION WITH THE  
EC SEEMS IN OUR MUTUAL INTEREST. THE DECISION BY THE  
COUNCIL OF MINISTERS ON SEPTEMBER 15 APPEARS TO HAVE  
LAUNCHED THE EC ON SERIOUS AND URGENT CONTINGENCY  
PLANNING.  
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